Abstract

The present invention discloses a method for treating pectin containing plant material. The fresh plant material is adjusted to a pH between 3.2 and 3.9 at a temperature below 90°C to render the native pectin esterase in the plant material inactive. Thus, minimal deesterification takes place during transportation of the plant material, nor during subsequent washing and/or conventional drying of the plant material. Since the enzyme remains inactivated, the activity of the enzyme can be re-established at a later point by increasing the pH to above about 4.0. Pectin made from such treated plant material has a higher molecular weight and a lower calcium sensitivity than pectin made from the same plant material, which has not been subjected to said treatment.